

REMARKS

New claims 17-34 have been added. Claims 1-16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 17-34 are currently pending in the application.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority. Submitted herewith is a certified copy of the corresponding Japanese patent application (JP 11-241024, filed August 27, 1999). An indication that this document has been safely received would be appreciated.

Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for granting a personal interview on June 10, 2004. The following was discussed during the interview.

New Claims

Applicants discussed claims corresponding to claims 17-25 added by this Amendment with the Examiner during the interview. Applicants indicated that corresponding method claims would also be added (claims 26-34).

In particular, it was pointed out to the Examiner that the patent to Blumenau et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,260,120) cited in the Office Action does not contain a second computer that is configured to receive a device assignment request for one of the first computers, prepare a device in a storage system satisfying the received request and setting an access permission for an access from one of the first computers to the prepared device by informing the storage system of an identification associated with one of the first computers, based on the received device assignment request. It is submitted that the storage controller 27 of Blumenau et al cannot perform the functions of the claimed second computer of the present invention.

Prior Art Search

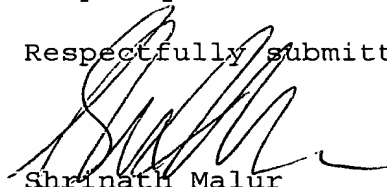
Applicants discussed a prior art search that had been conducted, the results of which accompany this response in an Information Disclosure Statement. In particular, the Examiner's attention was directed to Pothapragada et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,389,432). This patent discloses a virtual volume access system and method which creates a communication path between a requester and a selected data storage device. However, this patent does not disclose the setting of an

access permission for an access from one of the first computers to a prepared device as recited in the claims. In addition, while the patent does disclose the creation of a communication path, this path is not created between a server and a particular portion of the storage as is the presently claimed invention. As such, it is submitted that the pending claims patentably define the present invention over the cited art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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